

Teachers' analyses of learner errors in Grade 6 English First Additional Language

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated 6 Soweto primary school teachers' ability to analyse and give feedback on the errors of English First Additional Language learners. Drawing on literature on assessment for learning and feedback, as well as on error analysis of English second language learning, I developed a conceptual framework that enabled me to classify learner errors and teachers feedback strategies. I used a qualitative approach to investigate assessment abilities. Firstly, the teachers marked a written assessment task, identified errors, evaluated learner performance and gave feedback based on identified errors. Secondly, the teachers were interviewed on why learners made those errors and what feedback strategies they suggested for remediating the errors. The findings indicated that the teachers: i) were generally capable of identifying the errors, ii) struggled to correct the identified errors, iii) were still working in a summative mind-set, and iv) were insecure about their abilities to deal with English First Additional Language errors. Therefore, assessment for learning has a long way to go for the township primary school teachers.

Keywords

Error analysis, formative assessment, summative assessment, subject-matter knowledge, English First Additional Language, English as a Second Language

DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

Khethinkosi Armstrong Ntuli

30th day of August in the year 2013

DEDICATION

To my wife, Ntombifuthi, my daughters, Ntokozo and Andile, and my son, Lindokuhle

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List of Abbreviations

ANA – Annual National Assessment

CAPS – Curriculum And Assessment Statements

FAL – First Additional Language

KAL – Knowledge About Language

SFL – Functional Language Studies

TPA – Teacher Performance Appraisal